

## Compost

- a. Use only properly treated compost and do not use animal products.
  - i. Animal manure can create a high risk of pathogen contamination in the garden when not properly treated, aged, handled, or applied.
- b. Have an individual trained in composting practices oversee the compost. Best composting practices include the following:
  1. Achieving temperatures of >130 degrees F plus 3 months of curing for thermal composting or >6 months curing for cold (non-thermal) composting.
    - i. Additional information on time and temperature requirements can be found under the Resources tab.
  2. No harmful plants (noxious weeds) or diseased material are being used.
  3. Compost pile is properly aerated.
  4. Balance of carbon and nitrogen sources.
- c. Add only plant products, such as fresh fruit and vegetable culls from food.
- d. Avoid grass clippings or leaves unless you can verify that they were in a location that was free from pet waste or herbicide contamination. If grass clipping or leaf donations are received you must be able to verify that they are not contaminated. This is difficult to verify so utilizing these products on non-edible crops is optimal.
- e. Locate compost pile downhill and away from the garden to prevent run-off.



### Compost continued:

- f. If using cafeteria waste products, have documentation showing proper training procedures have been implemented and students/staff are not incorporating animal products, refuse, etc. into the compost bins. Compost stations must be monitored by an adult or a trained student during mealtime to ensure proper items are composted.
- g. Wear gloves when handling compost material. Gloves do not replace proper hand washing.
- h. Locate compost piles in a secure location away from potential contamination such as garbage, water runoff, etc. Restrict access by animals as much as possible.
- i. Organic matter must be fully composted before adding to garden or it will compete with plants for nitrogen.
- j. Consider using worms to form vermicompost. Learn about vermicomposting at: <http://www.bae.ncsu.edu/topic/vermicomposting/>.



Vermicomposting

1.



Fencing to keep wildlife out of the garden

Additional information on composting can be found under the Resources tab.

## Composting Requirements

**Use only properly treated compost or commercially prepared compost.**

Composted plant materials must be produced through processes that assure:

- For in-vessel or static aerated piles, temperatures must remain at 131 degrees or above for three consecutive days.
- For windrow compost piles, the temperature must remain at 131 degrees or above for at least 15 days.
- Windrow compost should also be turned a minimum of five times during the 15 day period after remaining at 131 degrees for three consecutive days.
- Static piles and windrows are to be probed for temperature daily at 10- to 15- foot intervals using a variety of depths to determine whether self-heating is taking place.



For more information regarding compost visit:

<http://compost.css.cornell.edu/schools.html>



<http://urbangardencasual.com/2010/05/22/composting-for-renters/>